

reminder of the ongoing threat faced by Pakistan, the United States, and all those who stand against violent extremism. We will assist Pakistan in confronting this threat and bringing the perpetrators to justice. We will fully support the democratically elected Government of Pakistan and the Pakistani people as they face enormous challenges economically as well as from terrorism.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Alvaro Uribe Velez of Colombia

September 20, 2008

Mr. President, members of your delegation, members of my Cabinet, Members of the United States Senate and United States Congress, honored guests: Welcome to the White House. Laura and I are really pleased you all are here. Our nations share a faith in liberty, a willingness to defend it, and a confidence that freedom will define the future for our region. The American people, Mr. President, are proud to call the Colombian people our friends and our allies.

You, Mr. President, are a strong leader. You and your Government and the Colombian people have shown courage in freedom's cause, by taking on the terrorists and the drug lords. This summer, our Nation was impressed by the daring rescue of 15 hostages, 3 of whom were American citizens. We appreciate your leadership. We are pleased to be your partner in strengthening the rule of law and combating the illegal drug trade and helping victims of violence rebuild their lives and communities.

We're also partners in the spread of prosperity. We have negotiated a fair free trade agreement that will benefit families and businesses in both our nations. And I appreciate your strong advocacy for this agreement. And my sincere hope is that the United States Congress will pass the Colombia free trade agreement as soon as possible.

Mr. President, Laura and I warmly remember our visits to your beautiful country. We were honored to visit a city liberated by the great Simon Bolivar. And in that visit we were honored to be with you and your lovely wife.

And so tonight I want to propose a toast to our friendship, the friendship between our countries. May God bless Colombia, and may God bless the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:31 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Marc Gonsalves, Thomas Howes, and Keith Stansell, former hostages held by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC); and Lina Maria Moreno de Uribe, wife of President Uribe. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Uribe. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the National Economy

September 22, 2008

Over the weekend, members of my administration and congressional leaders worked on legislation to address the crisis in our Nation's financial markets. They made good headway toward a bill that can pass the House and Senate in a timely manner, and the American people appreciate their efforts.

Obviously, there will be differences over some details, and we will have to work through them. That is an understandable part of the policymaking process. But it would not be understandable if Members of Congress sought to use this emergency legislation to pass unrelated provisions, or to insist on provisions that would undermine the effectiveness of the plan. I appreciate Members of Congress in both parties resisting the urge to do so, and keeping the rescue bill focused on solving the crisis in our financial markets.

Americans are watching to see if Democrats and Republicans, the Congress and the White House, can come together to solve this problem with the urgency it warrants. Indeed, the whole world is watching to see if we can act quickly to shore up our markets and prevent damage to our capital markets, businesses, our housing sector, and retirement accounts.

Failure to act would have broad consequences far beyond Wall Street. It would threaten small-business owners and homeowners on Main Street.